

Caring for your

Hamster



life span 1.5 – 2 years

diet Hamsters can do very well on a commercial rodent chow (24% protein) supplemented with vegetables and a small amount of fruit. Hamsters fed seed-based diets are very sensitive to Vitamin E deficiency.

housing

- A wire cage or a ten-gallon aquarium with a wire-mesh top. The fancier cages with tubes, tunnels and hideaways are also good.
- Hamsters are nocturnal. As desert animals, the Syrian hamster instinctively burrows and hoards food. Adult Syrian and Chinese hamsters are fiercely territorial and should be housed singly. Winter white Russian and Russian Campbell hamsters are social, however it is still ill advised to introduce new individuals to a group.
- Hamsters can enter torpor if temperatures fall below 41°F (5 C), particularly when exposed to short days.
- Syrian hamsters will hibernate if kept in a cool area with limited food.

restraint Syrian hamsters tend to bite, especially when awakened from a deep sleep or put through excessive or prolonged restraint. To pick up, cup hamsters in both hands. To restrain, grasp the loose skin over the thorax (mid-section). Roborovskii hamsters are gentle and docile, but very fast.

healthcare A hamster's teeth grow continuously, so your pet will need to chew—a lot. Their incisors will become yellow with age due to iron pigments. Your hamster may need veterinary attention if you notice: dull-looking eyes, matted fur, weight loss, shaking, runny nose or diarrhea.